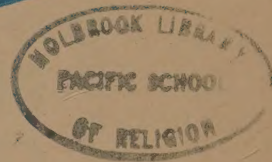




The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● OCTOBER 1973



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EDITOR'S NOTICE

Opinions expressed by contributors do not commit the C.S.I. Since the lamented death of Prof. D. A. Thangasamy the Rt. Rev. T. S. Garrett, Bishopstowe, Box 18, Tirunelveli 627 002, has been asked to edit until a new editor is appointed. Articles, reports and letters should be sent to him by the 5th of each month, if they are to be considered for publication in the following month.

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Church Government

Ideas of administration and management have changed radically in modern times. The value and efficiency of management or government are judged to-day by how much they can advance welfare and production and not by their ability to keep people under control. Keeping in control, if necessary at all, will be only incidental. Apart from new insights management requires specialised training to-day since the work of any business concern has become highly complicated and is carried on in different departments so that technical skill becomes necessary for effective co-ordination.

A few articles which have appeared within the last one year in the *South India Churchman* have pleaded for our Church treating administration or management as a field in which specialists or men and women with specialised training should be inducted. But, in most places in our Church, the old patterns continue so that management is still very largely a matter merely of running a Maintenance Department or keeping things going. This is chiefly because of insensibility in our Church to new needs and new demands and imperviousness to new ideas and insights.

Far from being the 'enabling agency' it ought to be, management in our churches often comes to be regarded as a field for the indulgence of self-importance and love of power. It becomes almost a second profession or career to certain types of laymen many of whom do not find fulfilment or achievement in their own professions. And one must also sadly admit that our Church is not free from the common evils or corruptions prevalent in management or the exercise of authority elsewhere such as nepotism and the abuse of power or funds for personal gain or advantage.

The manipulation of elections in order to get a place in the managing bodies or committees is another increasingly depressing feature of the life of our churches. About fifteen years ago, this was the exception, and the general practice was to have no electioneering and for names to be put forward for committees at the election meetings by individual proposers without collusion with others. Sometimes people had to be persuaded or requested not to decline nominations when the general opinion was that those proposed were the best or the most competent people. But all that has changed now in many of our dioceses, and a few people who are interested in getting elected join together to form a 'syndicate' and prepare a 'package' list of their own candidates, print the names and go about canvassing support for the whole block. The same tactics are often adopted by a rival block so that in the election one 'party' gets all the places on the Committee or Council and the other is completely routed. And even before the election each party has settled who will get which office or be elected to which 'higher committees' if it 'Comes to power' so that the primary elections practically decide also who will dominate the 'higher committees'. Thus, whether parties are formed on the basis of caste or vested interests or personal loyalties, a 'party' that can persuade 51% of those who are 'present and voting' to vote for it can manage to get the monopoly of all offices and places on committees that are decided by votes.

This situation has been vividly portrayed by Joyce Peel in one of the 'dialogue-sermons' in her recently published book, *Acts of the Spirit*:

Presbyter : What is the cause of this disturbance? Please remember that this is the House of God.

Church

Member : Not God's house, Pastor. It is a den of thieves! Our people are being swindled out of their rights by these men here.



Presbyter : What rights are you being swindled out of?

Member : Just now it is a matter of seats in the Cathedral for the Jubilee Celebrations. Every single one has been allocated to a member of the majority community. The Secretary has the list. Look at it please.

Secretary : (Handing over the list) Our Church has been given only four places. According to custom they have been given to the Treasurer, the Secretary—myself—the Women's Fellowship Secretary, and the Youth Secretary, all purely in virtue of our office.

Member : And every one of you belongs to the same community. Whenever we have elections we are outvoted, so of course your people get all the top positions. The only committees we ever get onto are the ones of no significance; such as Evangelism and Home Missions. If anything advantageous comes up we are left out. It's not just a matter of seats for the Jubilee celebrations, which includes a tea; it's scholarships, free housing quarters, places in the Church School, and Christmas gifts for the aged and widows.

Presbyter : I'm really very sorry about this. Perhaps this year custom could be waived. I'm sure the Youth Secretary could be persuaded to surrender his seat so that you could attend.

Member : It's not the Youth Secretary's seat I want, but a rightful place for my community. This business is only the last straw. I warn you, Pastor, if something isn't done to give us justice, we'll all of us leave this church and go elsewhere. (He goes out angrily).

What is at stake here is not merely the breach of fellowship that happens before and after elections with all the spiritual havoc that it can do in the churches, but the sheer efficiency and productiveness of the committees when they are constituted by men whose primary interest is the satisfaction of the sense of self-importance and of wielding power. Such men are most unlikely to have any enlightened views or convictions about the true nature and function of the Church. Nor are they likely to be men who would be willing to give time and attention to acquiring such views and convictions, since they are otherwise preoccupied.

The situation is aggravated by several other factors. There are a vast majority of members of each parish who have no interest at all in getting into committees and others who

might be willing to serve on them, but would not dream of trying to get into them by electioneering. Among these there may be many persons of integrity and ability who, if they were put on committees, would regard it as an opportunity for service and help the committees fulfil their objectives much better than those who might be there only for boosting their own ego. Again, whereas even in the state elections everybody who is an adult native of the country can vote, in our Church there is usually a clause about regular payment of a minimum subscription so that, virtually, only about a fifth of those who belong to a church take part in the church election. Almost the whole of the poor and the uneducated people in any parish, some of whom may have real spiritual wisdom, never get into committees simply because they are either too poor to pay the minimum subscription required or too ignorant and unsystematic to pay it regularly. Nearly one-half, most of the women, in any congregation are usually debarred just because the subscription is paid in the name of the husband or the son, and therefore they are technically disqualified from taking part in elections and from being nominated for election. This shrinking of the membership of a pastorate when it functions as an electorate makes it much easier for intensive electioneering to be carried on among those eligible to vote.

The experiences in many diocese would go to show that our usual election rules should be changed. It would be both stupid and irresponsible to say that if we have elections at all in the Church and if we adopt the democratic system for church government this is what we should expect. But one doesn't have to be even a student of politics to know that democracy, or any other form of government for that matter, will not work properly, unless there are checks and safeguards. The proposed legislation in our country for a check against 'crossing the floor' in houses of legislature is only one example of the realisation of the need for checks in order to keep those who take part in government responsible. And so, too, in the Church, we have to ask ourselves whether the checks we now have are really the ones we need and what other checks we need.

As has been pointed out we now seem to be safeguarding the Church from the exercise of executive or deliberative responsibility by women, children and the poor and uneducated. Should we not instead make it possible for women and the poor and uneducated also to share such responsibility and provide checks and safeguards against the havoc that is wrought by those who get into committees for long terms or cling to offices without vision, integrity or selflessness and fail to promote the mission of the Church?

A few safeguards might be suggested, almost off-hand. The responsibilities of many committees and offices in our Church can be carried out by any group from among a large number of people who are available. Even for other kinds of responsibilities for which fewer men may be regarded as qualified we should still have a considerable number of them to choose from. In order that many or at least some of those who are qualified might tone up the work of the Church and make it most fruitful through the application of their special talents or abilities, a kind of rotation could be secured by putting a limitation on the number of times a person can be elected to a committee or an office or the number of years for which he can serve at a stretch or on both. Again there could be requirements either by convention or even by constitution, that only those who have already taken part or will take part in certain activities such as Sunday School teaching, evangelistic preaching, running of study groups, laity education and so on would be eligible to serve or hold offices on committees where experience of such work or willingness to engage in it alone would give one the knowledge necessary intelligently and practically to deal with the concern of any particular committee.

Ex-officio positions on Committees also need to be rethought. It is humanly impossible for any one person to be concerned

with the work of many different departments at the same time. And yet, according to the constitutions of many of our dioceses, certain dignitaries or 'office-bearers' sit on every committee as if they had omniscience and superhuman energy and alertness of mind. What usually happens is that they apply their minds only to affairs that are brought up *during* the meetings and do not go on *thinking for* the work of the committees, making proposals, studying experiments or making them themselves, collecting facts and, in general, devoting a good deal of time and thought to the *concerns* of the committees such as education, health and evangelism. One might have observed at times an ex-officio chairman or other member of all committees sitting bored stiff through committee after committee. Here, too, therefore, it would be desirable, again by convention or constitution, to say that no one, including the Chairman, should have ex-officio positions on more than a certain number of committees.

We should also seriously ask ourselves whether the qualification of payment for eligibility to vote should not be done away with and whether in the meanwhile subscription paid in the name of a man should not entitle the wife also to take part in elections. Something must also be done to have a breakdown of the parish or other electorate into smaller constituencies so that all constituencies like wards in municipalities, can get represented and the majority 'party' or community does not fill up all the Committees.

Elections, and even committees, do not decide everything in our Church. In practice the ex-officio members of Committees, supported by nominated members or a group, have their way, and the tendency for authorities or office-bearers is to exercise authority with the support of them. Hence, in many places the pattern of administration is autocratic and is an adaptation of the authoritarianism and paternalism of the missionaries who ruled the Church in the pre-democratic era. There are frequent complaints in our churches of injustice, especially in postings and transfers, favouritism in appointments to paid or honorary jobs and discrimination on the basis of caste or similar prejudices. Democracy in the state has safeguards against these which are not present or easily available within our Church—question sessions in the legislature, appeal to the Government or 'higher authorities', ventilation of grievances or exposure of injustice of misdoings in the Press and reference to a court of law. We should consider here what equivalent safeguards there should be in the constitution and practice of our Church and its institutions against autocratic administration.

Church government should be a model to others, and Christian insights into administration must be a contribution the Church should be able to make to all administration. Our righteousness should exceed that of Government and our justice that of the courts of law. But, unfortunately, administration in our Church is often an end in itself and not the means to mission, and its standards—whether in the process of election by which it is partly constituted or in the exercise of authority by paid and appointed authorities of the Church—are not appreciably higher than in the Government or in the institutions outside.

Apart from questions of justice and the effectiveness of the witness of the Church, what is most deplorable about the kind of administration or government we now have in many dioceses of our Church is the lack of a clear understanding of the objectives of the different committees and concerns of the Church and the consequent failure of vision, planning and achievement. Some time ago, when a proposal was made in the committee on Education in one of our dioceses that there should be an examination of the objectives and performance of Secondary Schools maintained by that diocese, the Manager of the Schools first said that the Committee could not consider any proposal that the office-bearers of the committee did not bring up. But the Bishop allowed discussion of the proposal and then it was evident that most of the members had not thought that it was the business of the

committee to concern itself with the state or quality of education in the diocesan schools.

There is widespread discontent in our Church about exercise of authority, electioneering methods and the work of committees. It is clear that our constitutions need drastic revision in all these respects to provide adequate checks and safeguards, a few of which have been indicated here. Some time ago, at an informal committee convened by the Acting Moderator, it was recommended that all dioceses should be requested to organise one study group each to study electioneering, the functions of committees and the Constitution in general and that the findings should be studied and a report on them presented to the Synod Assembly of 1974. Unfortunately, owing to the Acting Moderator's illness and other reasons, the recommendation was not communicated to the dioceses. Who will now take up the study and work

for amendments to the constitutions and put through to other measures by which our Church government could become more just and more capable of carrying out our Church's mission in the world to-day?

D.A.T.

The above editorial had already been written by Mr. Thangasamy and sent to the press along with other matter in this issue before his death on 5th October. I have been asked to carry on with the editing of the magazine until a new editor has been appointed. I thought the best tribute to pay him this month was to print this issue as he intended it. The November issue will be an 'In Memoriam' number and will contain tributes from friends and colleagues.

T. S. GARRETT.

DEVOTIONAL—(Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost)

The Christian and his Daily Work

Is he not the carpenter's son?

Matthew 13:55

I met a young man at a church. He was in the Air Force, flying bombers. I asked him how he related his faith to his daily work. He said that each time he took off on a sortie, he said a word of prayer at the cockpit. To the same question, an officer in a very sedentary and secure job responded 'Of course, we have problems, you know, sometimes we have to work on Sundays'. I thought I had heard the two extremes of the Christian concept of work.

The problem seems to be our inability to relate our faith, our belief, to our work. This inability to recognise God in the work-spot results in a dichotomic division between faith and work, leading on to an over-emphasis on the traditional modes of worship. This partially explains why there is so much of resistance to any attempted change in the mode of corporate worship. A week-end religion is conveniently evolved.

Christians in Tamilnadu are largely middle and lower middle class, most of them in salaried jobs. The earlier generation that worked in the benevolent shadow of the church, teachers, evangelists and writers, has given place to a generation of men who work outside the area of the church, often described as 'secular occupations'. The traditional concept of work has undergone a change, with night shifts and Sunday duties. This new situation is challenging and offers great scope to relate our faith to work. Says Horst Symanowski who has done significant work in Germany through Industrial missions, 'The Christian is like a hound who thrusts his nose to the earth, trying to keep on the track of his Lord in order to find him at work in the secular world'. The change in the nature of work also poses certain new problems. Boredom at work for example. As society gets more and more oriented towards technology, repetitive and monotonous jobs are on the increase.

Once the possibilities of applying faith in work are recognised, worship and work blend harmoniously and work becomes more and more satisfying. Faith has to be related to work, not in an evangelistic way, but in a very human way. Thus tremendous opportunities to serve our neighbour are

revealed, the neighbour who works with us, above and below. A smile to the liftman and a concern for the driver's lunch bring a little more sunshine around. We usually work in a system that is hierarchical and rigid. There are moments when this system has to be ignored and a hand stretched out, in a gesture of love.

Rooted in our belief in Christ, a work ethic has to be developed. This ethic will not be out of tune with the Christian sense of values. But the fear of falling by the wayside in the race for positions in society completely perverts one's sense of values and adversely affects one's concept of work. Work begins to have its value in proportion to the wealth it produces. The result is that a great number of us do not enjoy work. Work is considered only as a means to a living. This attitude thwarts any possible relation between religion and daily work.

One often hears about the meaninglessness of certain types of work. It is the application of one's talents and personality that makes work enjoyable. Each individual is different and is precious in the eyes of the Lord, as an individual. We have to choose a career in which our talents and aptitudes blossom forth in fulness. There are people among us who have made such a choice and have settled for less remunerative jobs. However, to judiciously exercise such a choice the ability to form considered opinions and to understand one's own aptitudes has to be developed at the college stage itself. I am aware of the tremendous difficulties in choosing one's job. But even where it is possible we do not seem to exercise this choice, and that is tragic.

Often a person realises that he has not made a proper choice with regard to his vocation and that now he does not have the courage to take any risk. Any change of career at this stage may be at a heavy cost of material security. But such a change will however free him from the provisional life he has been leading and enable him to rediscover himself and find true fulfilment.

—S. THEODORE BASKARAN.

Objectives of Church Administration

By J. R. CHANDRAN

It is a very healthy sign that we are beginning to reflect on the meaning of administration in the Church. Even though from the beginning the Church was involved in administration and organisation the question of the relationship between administrative structure and the nature and function of the Church had been seldom raised. On the contrary it was often assumed that, while administration is necessary, the ministers of the Church, bishops as well as others should not let their administrative duties hamper their essential Christian ministry. At the same time we are familiar with the comment regarding some that they are good pastors, or preachers or evangelists, but poor in administration. While Theological Colleges are sometimes criticised for not giving adequate attention for the preparation of men for their administrative work, on the whole what is demanded is preparation for their role as preacher, pastor, evangelist and spiritual counsellor. But in a statement of the Theological Commission adopted by the C.S.I. Synod at its meeting in 1964 it was affirmed 'that the pastoral and administrative functions of the bishop belonged together and their complete separation was neither possible nor desirable.' The statement further went on to say, 'Without getting himself entangled in the financial, educational and medical administration of the diocese, the bishop and his council must co-ordinate all the various aspects of the life and work of the diocese so as to edify the Church, witness to the Gospel and serve the needy world'. (C.S.I. Synod Minutes 1964, pp. 94-95).

Today, in the secular world, administration is understood as much more than the routine office work which goes on in the 'administrative section' of an organisation or institution. Administration is integrally related to the aims, functions and goals of the organisation and elaborate training programmes have been developed for the management of different types of organisations, such as business, industry and hospitals. The science of managerial training is advanced enough for the development of firms with experts on management consultancy. In India also there are several such firms.

The question is whether the results of studies on administration of secular organisations can be meaningfully applied to the administration of the Church. In U.S.A. and Canada several churches in recent years, have engaged management consultants to advise them on organisational and administrative problems. Peter F. Rudge, in his book *Ministry and Management* (London, Tavistock Publications, 1968) points out that 'The Consultants generally have shown a remarkable sensitivity to the character of their assignments, respecting the theological nature of the Church, the conception of its purpose (as distinct from that of business organisation) and the involvement and commitment of the members' (p. 9). As a result of the enlightened awareness of the relation between administration and the ministry of the Church, many Theological Seminaries in North America as well as University Schools of Theology provide special courses of training in Church administration. Even though the methods of business and industrial organisations may not be directly applicable to Church administration, it is important to realise that effectiveness depends a great deal on efficiency of administration.

The analyses of administration and organisations have led to the identification of different theories such as traditional, classical, charismatic, human relations and systemic. (A clear description of these theories is found in Peter F. Rudge's book, chapter 3). But no particular theory is exclusively

applicable to Church administration. What is important is not what theory we adopt, but how far the administration is rooted in the theology of the Church and witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The images in the New Testament which are basic to the understanding of the life and mission of the Church, such as the People of God, the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ and the new creation suggest involvement in a dynamic movement for the fulfilment of God's purposes for his creation, rather than a fixed static institution or organisation. The Church's life is not just one of maintaining a level that has been accomplished but growing towards 'the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ'. Such growth happens both for individual members and for the whole corporate body of the Church in the context of participation in the evangelistic mission of Jesus Christ bringing salvation to all and in all spheres of life. Therefore administration based on concepts of a fixed static structure with inflexible rules and regulations implied in the traditional and classical theories of organisation is unsuitable for the Church. The Church administration must be such that it enables the Church to be a community committed to the working out of Salvation in Christ, sensitive to the changing cultural, religious, social and political situations and competent to make meaningful and timely responses to the changing situations. This needs to be borne in mind while applying the insights about administration gained from secular business and industrial organisations.

What W. E. Beveridge says in his book *Managing the Church* (S.C.M. Press, London, 1971) is quite relevant for our context also: 'We are not of course likely to produce a tidy set of main objectives and targets to cover every aspect of the Church's work, but we have got to sweat at thinking towards them. We may have to go through a long and difficult period of confusion, but it will be a creative confusion that arises out of concern and commitment and not out of indifference or complacency. It will be a creative confusion because it holds the promise of movement forward... It will be creative confusion because it is not prepared to accept a conventional orderliness that is unrelated to the real problems of man in the world' (p. 118).

With these general perspectives in mind I would like briefly to mention a few specific objectives.

(a) Church administration should be such that it promotes *fellowship*, which is a quality of togetherness of those who belong to Jesus Christ. Christian fellowship is not the produce of sentimental piety but rooted and grounded in the love of Christ which is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Administration should provide the framework for people to work together in harmony and love. This means that at least *three* basic principles should characterise Church administration. *First*: those who exercise authority do so by common consent and are responsible to the members. At the same time what is envisaged is not merely the principle of secular democracy. The Christian awareness of their togetherness as the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit recognises that the authority given to individuals or groups is ultimately dependent on the authority of the Holy Spirit and both those who exercise the authority and the people to whom they are responsible should always remember this. *Secondly*: Doing things in an orderly manner, following the rules and regulations already agreed on is very important. Particularly in the handling of money and property the Church's administrative procedures should reflect the highest standards of integrity and accountability. Strict and impartial exercise of

discipline in these matters will be in the interest of fellowship.

Thirdly: in the procedures for decision-making through councils and committees there should be provision for the widest possible participation by different sections of the membership. Adequate representation should be given to both sexes, different age groups, linguistic groups, and other categories such as class, professions, geography, etc. by which members are recognised as separate identifiable groups.

(b) The administration should be such that it promotes the image of the Church as *the People of Christ* committed to the Servant Lord to serve one another and others. Through wrong developments in the history of the Church the image has been seriously distorted. It was a distorted image derived from paganism and its temples which associated the Church with Church buildings. Another distortion associated it with institutions. The Church in India continues to be associated with Church buildings, institutions and their administration. Certainly we cannot avoid the administration of Church buildings and institutions. But if that maintains and produces a wrong image of the Church, some radical rethinking for the restructuring of Church life is needed in order to build up the image of a servant people, both for the self-understanding of the membership and for others looking at the Church.

(c) Right use of available man-power for the total life and mission of the Church is another important principle to observe. The men whom the Church is able to recruit and train for the ordained ministry, the lay people who are available for different forms of service have different gifts and this should be taken into consideration when they are assigned to places and functions. Often individuals are frustrated because the traditional structures within which they have to function do not give them sufficient freedom for creative ventures. Financial considerations also often prevent men and women from being sent to the places or congregations where they will be most useful. Equally important are arrangements for periodic review of service conditions as well as living conditions of the men and women employed by the Church for its ministry.

(d) Administrative structures and arrangements need rethinking and streamlining for the purpose of increasing efficiency, avoiding unnecessary duplication of work and promoting simplicity of internal administration and effectiveness of missionary outreach to the world. If we are not sufficiently alert we can waste a good deal of time and energy for uncreative internal house-keeping business and have little time left for the real business of the Church. For example, even after the division of the Mysore Diocese into three dioceses, each Diocese continues to function through Area Councils. Observing the functioning of the Area Councils in Mysore Central Diocese my impression is that unless they are reconceived and reorganised with distinctive functions they serve very little purpose. They only make the diocesan administration cumbersome and cause unnecessary wastage of time for the people involved in it. Every Diocese needs to review its administration with a view to simplifying the structure.

(e) In order that Church administration can effectively serve the essential nature and function of the Church special

attention should be given at all levels of administration, congregational, diocesan and Synodal, to the consideration of priorities in the use of the Church's resources of people and money. The World Council of Churches has a Priority Committee to advise the Council on priorities for its programmes and resources. At the last meeting of the W.C.C. Central Committee one of the recommendations made was that 'The Priority discussions of the W.C.C. should be reflected in the respective Committees of the member churches with regard to their own programme priorities'. In determining the priorities certain dimensions belonging to the essential character of the Church should be the guide. The inner life of the Church should be nourished by the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and therefore the arrangements for the Preaching of the Gospel, the administration of the Sacraments, Christian nurture, and exclusion of false teaching or heretical distortions of the Gospel must necessarily have the highest priority. The Church exists not for itself but for others. Therefore outreach programmes for communication of the good news of Jesus Christ, service to the needy and participation in the struggle for social justice are integral to the nature of the Church. While the Church finds itself in a divided state with its denominational separatedness its calling is to manifest the oneness of Christ's people. Therefore participation in ecumenical co-operation with other Churches, and in Church Union movements should have very high priority. One of the important and now widely known though not universally understood insights of the New Testament is that the special ministries of pastors, evangelists, prophets, teachers and others are the gifts of Christ to his Church only in order that the Church as a whole may fulfil its ministry. This means the real ministry belongs to the people, the laity. Therefore, arrangements for the training of the laity for the ministry of the Church in the World have also high priority. The question to bear in mind in this regard is whether the training of the laity is directed to pull them out of the woods to go to Church or to send them into the world as members of the Body of Christ, extending the power of the new creation to different spheres of the life of the World.

In conclusion I would like to quote the words of W. E. Beveridge:

'Of course, if one believes that the Church should be a back-water, a haven of rest, into which one can retreat from the World and where one can commune in splendid isolation with one's God, then organising for effective action in the World hardly seems necessary. But if one believes that the Incarnation means the engagement of God with his World, the treating seriously of his world, his being caught up in the tensions, the conflicts, the problems, the sweat, the agonising and the heart-break of the World, then it does matter. In that case the Church cannot afford to avoid rethinking her objectives and in the light of these, restructuring herself for effective action. This is not to turn her back on Christ, but to follow him into the confusion of the wilderness, so that when she emerges, it is knowing what her task is, what her resources need to be, and where her strength lies.'

(*op. cit.*, pp. 119-20).

Two thousand years ago, when Christ entered a stable to renew human life, the family unit began to widen to the family of man, the tribal nation to one world. Every man is now my brother. We step forward together with Christ to create the perfect body of mankind, which is the very body of Christ. This is the good news of the Christian gospel'.

—DICK KEITHAHN in *Pilgrimage in India*.

Basis of Membership and Voting Rights in the Church of South India

E. D. DEVADASAN, *Advocate, Madras*

The Church of South India, under the Constitution of the CSI has been defined as a 'Church'. However, a great deal of confusion may be avoided if we recognise that the 'Church of South India' denotes a denomination; the denomination that came into existence in the Christian World in September 1947 by the merger of 'Anglican Churches', the Methodist Churches and the South India United Church in Southern India. The term 'Church' may be confined to denote a congregation worshipping together in one place of worship whether within a building or in the open air.

What makes a denomination? The aggregate of congregations that accept the following would make a denomination:

- (i) Common Ministry
- (ii) Same Doctrine of Faith
- (iii) Same basis of Membership
- (iv) Same type of Church Government
- (v) Same Church Law including the Marriage Law of the Church.
- (vi) Same relationship with other denominations, i.e. matters relating to communion or merger with other denominations could be taken up only through the highest body of the Denomination.

Naturally, no denomination is confined to a geographical area. Therefore, theoretically speaking, it is open to anyone to start a church under the denomination of the Church of South India in other parts of India or even in USA, Africa or UK or for that matter in any part of the world, provided they fulfil the aforementioned conditions. This is how the denomination with the origin in one country with the name of the country spreads itself in different parts of the world. For instance, the Ceylon Pentecostal Denomination which is statutorily incorporated in Ceylon has Churches in different parts of the world called Ceylon Pentecostal Church. Fortunately, there is no such tendency with the CSI denomination. Although there may be groups in different parts of the world willing to fulfil the aforementioned conditions, they are not encouraged to start the CSI denominational Church outside the original area. Such Christians or groups of Christians are encouraged to join the nearest churches for fellowship and worship. In one sense that is the basic philosophy of the CSI denomination. That is, one who desires to worship Christ and seeks the fellowship of the believers shall have no justification to ignore the nearest Church or the fellowship of the company of believers in the neighbourhood area and seek fellowship elsewhere. This underlying principle of the CSI will be negated if groups of Christians are encouraged to start CSI Denominational Churches outside the original area.

If one is able to make this clear distinction between the CSI as a denomination and the local congregation as the Church, then it would be easier to explain the basis of membership.

The membership in any Church or congregation is open to a Christian if he comes under the CSI denomination. That is, a man who belongs to the denomination of the CSI is entitled to become a member if he satisfies the conditions in Clause (1) of Chapter III, of the Constitution of the CSI i.e. (i) he shall be a resident in that area (ii) he shall have been baptised with water in the name of the Father and Son and of the Holy

Spirit and (iii) he is willing to abide by the rules and customs of the Church (iv) provided he is not a member of any Christian Body which is not in communion with the Church of South India, and (v) has not been ex-communicated by lawful ex-communication and (vi) is not apostate to some non-Christian religion.

You will find from the above that baptised children are also members of the Church, but the full privileges and obligations of membership are available only to one who makes public profession of his faith either in the service of Confirmation or otherwise receives communicant status. The adult communicant members have the privilege of participation in the government of the Church as well as in the other structures of the Church including the Diocesan Council and the Synod. Adult means a person who has attained the age of 21 years. It is open to a Church to attach other conditions to the exercise of this privilege of participation in the Church government. Normally one of the conditions is that he shall not have the right of participation in a particular Church government if he has similar privilege in any other Church. The participation in the Church government includes the right to vote to elect members of the Executive Committee of the Church. Only such of those members who are communicant members who do not have the right to vote in any other Church will have the right to vote in a Church in which he is a member. Some of the Churches may also insist on payment of regular monthly or annual fees to be admitted as a member entitled to participate in the Church government. The restriction on a Member to participation in the Church government through one particular Church is a valid one; otherwise one person may pay subscription in several churches and claim the participation in the Church government in all the Churches. This will not be in the right spirit of a Church. A Church essentially means a group of believers in close fellowship with each other.

One essential feature is that a member shall be a resident in the area. In the Constitution this is not mentioned casually or incidentally but is specifically provided therein under rule 5 in Chapter III that a member shall not permanently lose his privilege and obligations of full membership in a Church merely because he moves out of that area for the time being and is a member of another Church. It means that when he returns to the original area, he has a right to renew the membership and to seek the Church's ministrations. As mentioned earlier, the 'neighbourhood' appears to be an underlying principle of the CSI denomination. If so, how a person who resides in one part of the city could seek membership in a Church in another part of the city remains an open question. The expression 'area' is not defined. However, from the context one could infer that the area would mean the neighbourhood of a worshipping centre without one such area encroaching upon other such area, i.e. the territory allotted to a particular pastor attached to a worshipping centre by the Bishop or the Diocese. This cannot be rigidly applied where the question of language arises. For a Malayalam member of the CSI in Madras City, the entire Madras City and surrounding area shall be the area demarcated to a pastor by the Bishop in Madras. Therefore, any member within that area shall be entitled to become a member of the CSI Malayalam Church in Madras. Thus, residence in a particular territory is an essential requirement to become an adult communicant member of a Church entitled

to participate in the Church government, with the necessary adjustments justified purely on language consideration.

The corner-stone of the CSI or for that matter any denomination is that the local Church may have some responsibility for co-ordinating the work or for exercising the right of legislation. The Synod may have legislative powers or right of decision in regard to the other aspects that go to make a denomination. The Diocesan Council may well have certain responsibilities to co-ordinate the functions of

the different churches and to demarcate the area among the different Churches. Responsibility and power of the Synod and the Diocese should be exercised in as minimum a measure as possible so that the Churches and Congregations become the vital factor in the life of the CSI. Until we are able to allow the local churches to function with the least interference and encroachment both from the Diocese and the Synod of the CSI these local Churches will continue to be feeble.

Centralisation of Authority in C.S.I.—For and Against

B. RATNASWAMY, *Advocate, Madurai*

1. Centralisation of authority in the Church of South India could be viewed from two different angles. It would refer to the relationship between the Synod and the dioceses; it would also refer to the relationship between the dioceses and its constituent units.

2. As far as an ordinary member of the C.S.I. in the various dioceses is concerned, he is practically not aware of the existence of the Synod and it comes into his horizon only on the occasion when his diocese stirs itself to elect a New Bishop. It is true that the Constitution lays down that the diocese will deal with its internal affairs and that the Synod shall deal with matters of common interest to the whole Church of South India and with those that affect the relation of the dioceses to one another and to the rest of the universal Church. The following remark is made in *Renewal and Advance*, (the Report of the C.S.I. Commission on Integration 1963):

‘Though by intention and constitution we are one Church, in practice to a considerable extent we still have the appearance of a collection of dioceses bound together in a loose federation rather than an organic unity,’ appears to hold good even today. It appears desirable that some departments of work now run at the diocesan level should be brought under agencies functioning at the level of the Synod. Notably the hospitals run by the various dioceses may stand to gain. There should be more facilities for interchange of staff, channelling of resources in terms of personnel, equipment and funds from the various Missionary societies, etc. It may be possible to develop hospitals of the standing of the Christian Mission Hospital, Vellore. Whatever may be the future of our work in the field of education, direct evangelism, etc., there will be no hindrance to Christian participation in the ministry of healing in this country; and it will be appropriate and more effective if the Synod representing the entire C.S.I. could be substantially entrusted with direct and increasing responsibility for this type of work.

3. Coming to the relationship between the Diocese and its units, the pastorates, it is easy to make out a case for centralisation of authority. Barring a few city congregations and a few major rural congregations, a majority of pastorates in all dioceses do not have enough resources to maintain a pastor. If it is left to the pastorates to recruit their own pastor, it would lead to several anomalies. Even now the position of the clergy in respect of emoluments, pension, provident fund, etc. is far from satisfactory. The small progress that has been achieved in recent years is only through the stabilisation of the ministerial fund at the level of the dioceses through a system of assessment of the various pastorates. The existence of a cadre of dedicated, efficient and contented clergymen is indispensable to the church and this could be secured only by strengthening the central authority in the diocese. Every diocese in the C.S.I. looms large mainly because of the number of institutions functioning

within its framework. Several of these institutions have to be in contact with the Government and or other missionary bodies, etc., to raise resources for their work. The central authority in the diocese is more adapted to this work of liaison between several bodies and it is more effective in making its representations. Further the needs and resources of the various parts of the diocese may vary greatly; and only a central authority can make a balanced appraisal of the needs of each area and plan for implementation of programmes giving priority to areas which need help most and stand a good chance of forwarding the witness of the Church. The properties of the units are protected from encroachment and put to more profitable use if they are supervised from a central source. The various funds belonging to the units also are properly protected and used if they are held in the central treasury.

4. It is a safe generalisation perhaps to suggest that, since the advent of the C.S.I., the central authority in almost all dioceses has generally extended its authority either by written amendment to the Constitution or still more by usages which may not be very apparent except to close observers or those actually involved in the day to day administration. To cite one instance, it is in the constitution that the correspondent or the managing committee shall make appointments of staff to a High School. In actual practice, appointment is practically initiated at the level of the central leadership. In the process the correspondent is mainly a dignified signing machine; and the committee is given the privilege of passing a resolution approving an appointment already made. Such a situation would lead to a sense of indifference and lack of initiative on the part of the local community.

5. There is another great danger—spiritual danger—that lurks in the strengthening of central leadership in the Church. The central leadership consists mainly of the Bishop and other officers of the Diocese and chairmen of the areas. Most of these incumbents are presbyters in whole time pastoral work and the few laymen are very often officials in the institutions affiliated to the church. These people have to divert their time and attention from the calling to which they had dedicated themselves, that of being shepherds to their congregations, and engage themselves in deliberations in committees and administration of institutions. For shouldering the latter responsibility, they have neither the required knowledge, nor training and experience. In the above situation it is evident that both pastoral work and institutional administration stand adversely affected. As for laymen they are helpless as in the present state of the constitution in several dioceses. Independent laymen are either unable or unwilling to find their way to positions of responsibility in the central leadership.

6. I have attempted to confine myself to the brief passed on to me as indicated in the title ‘Centralisation of authority in C.S.I.—for and against.’ I am neither competent nor is

it expected of me to suggest blue-prints for progress in the future.

7. In the Report of the Church of South India Commission on Integration and Joint Action, 1963, one comes across the following observation: 'It can hardly be disputed that there is a lack of spiritual vigour and depth in our life to-day, both as congregations and as Christian families. There has been a slackening of the sense of commitment to the Christian life and task. The sense of vocation is generally weak among both ministers and laity. Mediocrity of Christian living and lukewarmness in service perhaps best describe in general terms the average life of our church at present.'

Bureaucracy in C.S.I.

J. SATHYANATHAN,* Dharwar

'Bureaucracy' is a word of many meanings. In Germany it is used in a respectable and even laudatory sense to designate the institution of permanent professional officials. But in the English speaking world, the word 'bureaucracy' carries an invidious overtone. It has not been accepted as a respected profession of social administrative organisation. There is a growing tendency in social science to use the word 'bureaucracy' to designate the rule of officialism as a social institution. Literally bureaucracy would mean 'bureau' rule, as autocracy means the rule of the despot and democracy the rule of the people.

In the light of this introduction can we call the administration of the Church of South India a bureaucracy? In the modern democracies officials are considered the servants and not the masters of the people, in ancient despotic rule the officials were uncontrolled and absolute and the power to shape the destiny of the country and its citizens rested in a hereditary elite. Does our administrative set-up in the C.S.I. reflect the former or the latter? It is for us who have experienced the working of the C.S.I. for the last quarter of a century to judge whether it adopts the democratic pattern or not.

Karl A. Wittfogel in *Oriental Despotism* (1957) gave vivid examples of the power of officials in ancient cultures. Wittfogel made the interesting contrast between a ruling bureaucracy and a controlled bureaucracy. The former prevailed in autocratic states and the latter exists in democratic societies.

Some of the leaders in the C.S.I. have entertained the idea that our administrative organisation is akin to some of the oriental despotic cultures.

The Synod is the supreme governing and legislative body of the Church of South India. It has power to make rules and amend the constitution and take necessary action from time to time for the general management and good government of the church. It deals with the matters concerning the whole church and also the relation of dioceses to one another.

The Synod is composed of all the Bishops of the dioceses, the elected representatives of the clergy and laity from the dioceses and ten members nominated by the Moderator. The office-bearers are elected at the biennial meeting of the synod. The Synod also elects the members for the standing committees and boards. In between the biennial sessions of the Synod the Executive Committee exercises all the powers of the Synod. It also appoints the Working Committee consisting of ten members including the office-bearers. The Moderator, the Deputy Moderator, the General Secretary and the Treasurer are elected by the Synod, but two Bishops

8. Even after the lapse of a decade perhaps the above comment holds good even to-day.

9. The expected spurt in evangelism consequent on the union has not materialised; but it is good to remind ourselves that authority in the Church—be it central or local—is exercised by individuals only. If all of them could make themselves fully alive to their responsibilities and shoulder the responsibilities with the single-minded purpose that God and the Church be magnified, the image of the Church will still be transformed before the eyes of men and the C.S.I. will have fulfilled in a measure the desires and aspirations of those who prayed and laboured for its formation years ago.

two Presbyters and two Laymen are elected by the Executive Committee. The Working Committee meets once a quarter and the Executive Committee meets at least once a year. The Working Committee's actions are presented and ratified by the Executive Committee. Further the Synod's work is carried on by the Standing Committees and Boards, which are elected at each session. These Committees present their reports and make recommendations to the Synod on various aspects of the church's life and work.

This is a clear indication that there is a well-organised bureaucratic set-up in the C.S.I. But the question is whether it is a democratic set-up or an autocratic organisation? The whole administration at the top is vested in the Working Committee. Normally the Moderator is a bishop who lives in his own diocese and the Synod office is located in Madras. The Deputy Moderator is also a bishop holding full charge of a diocese. As both of them are having full-time work in their dioceses, the query is, how much time can they spare for the Synod's work? Then who carries on the burden of the Synod's administration? The general administration is vested in the person of General Secretary and the financial and property functions are handed over to the Treasurer of the Synod who is an ex-officio Secretary and Treasurer of the C.S.I.T.A. with its Registered office at Madras. In short the C.S.I. administration is carried on by two persons with the help of two committees—(a) the Working Committee and (b) the Executive Committee. These two officers, General Secretary and Treasurer, look after the affairs of seventeen dioceses, representing 1051 Pastorates and 14,34,532 Christian Community (*vide Appendix V 1970-71*).

The General Secretary : W.C. 71-19.

Apropos the job description for the post of General Secretaryship the following was accepted by the Working Committee as the nature of work of the General Secretary and the Treasurer—

1. To visit initially all the dioceses of the C.S.I. during the first term of office;
2. Visit periodically the dioceses during the subsequent terms;
3. Attend as many Diocesan Council meetings as possible;
4. Attend the very special functions or celebrations in the dioceses in addition to attending the services of consecration of Bishops and their installation;
5. Attend, ex-officio, the meetings of the Boards and Standing Committees of the Synod;
6. Represent the C.S.I. in the National Christian Council Assembly;

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7. Represent the C.S.I. in the various interdenominational exchanges in India, specially where official representation is necessary ;
8. Handle all Secretariat matters at the Synod office ;
9. Look after the work of the *South India Churchman* as its Business Manager.

The Treasurer :

1. The Treasurer has to maintain all the accounts of the Synod.
2. He has to find the resources through the assessments from the dioceses for maintaining the Synod office and its work.
3. He has to maintain contact with foreign Missionary Societies with regard to finances. He receives gifts from the Western Churches to be used by the Synod for specific purposes.
4. He prepares annual financial statement and prepares the budget for the Synod.
5. He is an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee where decisions are taken for the proper use of its funds.
6. He is in charge of all the investments of the church left in India by foreign Missionary Societies.
7. He is an ex-officio member of the C.S.I.T.A. and as Treasurer of the Synod, he is the Secretary and Treasurer of the Church of South India Trust Association.
8. He is in charge of all the properties of the Synod and the dioceses with his Registered office at Madras.
9. He can recommend how to use the funds that are available from foreign resources.

Thus we notice that the administration of the C.S.I. is highly centralised. Some call this the bureaucracy of the C.S.I. Can we think of a plan to decentralise the administration ?

Diocese :

At the diocesan level we observe that the administration is also centralised. The dioceses framed their own constitution after the inauguration of the C.S.I. in September, 1947. Some of the dioceses are too large to be managed efficiently by one Bishop. The commission on integration and joint action in *Renewal and Advance* advocated the division of some of the large dioceses into two or three dioceses. This suggestion has been implemented by the erstwhile Mysore Diocese. But the dioceses in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu are yet to adopt this recommendation.

The Diocesan Councils meet in most cases biennially and they elect the office-bearers and the members of the Standing Committees and Boards. The whole system appears to be more bureaucratic. The Secretary and Treasurer even at the diocesan level are more powerful than the Bishop or the Area Chairmen. They control the whole administration of the diocese. What is the way out of this autocratic bureaucracy ? Should we think of decentralisation of administration in the light of past experience ? What is the part of the local congregations in the life and work of the church ? Can the areas be given more responsibilities to get the laity involved in church work ?

Suggestions :

1. At the synod level it is highly desirable to have a full-time Moderator who can give more of his time for the spiritual growth of the church.
2. The Moderator will find time to contribute to closer co-operation between the dioceses. He is the connecting link to explore the possibilities for developing evangelistic interest and training of lay volunteers in the areas of the dioceses.
3. He should encourage regional conferences for strengthening the church. The Moderator must be the spiritual head of the organisation. He must be free from all committees and boards.
4. The Deputy Moderator may preside over the committee meetings and attend to the routine work of the Synod.
5. The General Secretary's assignments may be shared by the Moderator to some extent if he is a full-time person.
6. The finances should be decentralised and the foreign funds be distributed to the dioceses concerned.
7. The C.S.I.T.A. also should be disintegrated and the dioceses should share the responsibility for the properties.
8. At the diocesan level the Bishop should give more time for spiritual growth and integration of the diocese.
9. The Diocesan Secretary should be willing to share his work with the Area Chairmen.
10. Smaller dioceses will be desirable for effective and concentrated work of the church in the diocese.
11. The dioceses must be divided into smaller units or districts. The District Minister must be able to help his young associates in the great tasks of evangelism and nurture of the church.
12. The Diocesan Treasurer should try to pass on the funds to the Area Chairmen and to the Conveners of various Boards such as Medical Board, Industrial Board, Education Committee, etc. The money should not be accumulated in one place, which, incidentally may come under the new income-tax rules.
13. There should be inter-diocesan transfer of Bishops. This is essential in the interest of the church and the Bishops.
14. Regional synods may be encouraged on the basis of language. These synods can share their problems and chalk out their own programme for deepening of the spiritual life of the church.

Many problems are raised rather than solutions provided. It is the duty of every leader of the church to think and consider the above issues in the interest of the church and try to put forth suggestions for making our bureaucratic set-up more democratic as stated by Karl A. Wittfogel. In modern democracies 'officials are considered the servants and not the masters of the people'. Let us follow in the foot-prints of our Master who said, 'I came not to be ministered unto but to minister'.

Have we learned as we ought to have done from the mistakes of the past ? Are we listening to Him as followers of Jesus Christ ought to listen ? Most important of all, have our Indian colleagues, now in charge, learned from these mistakes ? What are we doing to truly help the Church to be native to India ? Woe unto those who try to maintain the status quo in this day of change ? Woe unto most of us who live by a system that sucks the blood out of the veins of the brother !

The past is insufficient for the needs and vision of today.

—DICK KEITHAHN in *Pilgrimage in India*.

Methods of Elections and Electioneering in the C.S.I. and Reforms to be Considered

W. S. PACKIANATHAN, Palayamkottai

Church election ! It often happens that Church elections bring out the divisiveness in the Church in the same way as political elections do in the political state. An examination of the *modus operandi*, the motivations and the final results will really show how meaningless these elections are. They serve no purpose in relation to the real cause of the Church.

I have witnessed two of these elections. The first amused me and the second alarmed me. One candidate in my second experience was challenged as to why he went about slandering a certain member of the same congregation. He blandly replied that it was all part of electioneering, nothing serious. The Church gets split during these elections. Two or three persons emerge as heads of groups and plan the campaign. Bargains are proposed and fixed ; prospective portfolios are agreed upon and the campaign gets into full swing. Intrigues within the group are not unknown. One person who was promised a seat in the Diocesan Council found himself played out and he went about exposing the treachery.

The most amusing thing in all this is the after-election gossip exposing the travesty of Church elections. How clownish it all appears! Yet, from another side, what a tragedy! Christ is set at naught during these elections and Christian standards are at their lowest. One bishop has aptly described these elections as 'quadrennial crises'. Yes, there is a serious crisis in principles, standards, Christian virtues and ultimate purpose. The Church is at its worst at election time.

There is, of course, nothing wrong in wanting to hold a post of responsibility in the Church. St. Paul writes to Timothy, 'If a man desires the office of a bishop he desires a good work'. But St. Paul does not stop there. He goes on to name the minimum 'character-faith-efficiency' qualification required for the office coveted. Similarly there is nothing wrong today in wanting to get involved in the structure of the Church. It is a noble desire. But before rushing into electioneering one must ask oneself what exactly is one's motive. Is it to further the ministry of the Church in its modern situation, or is it really something else? Ah, yes. To be elected or appointed the Lay Secretary, Manager of Schools, Correspondent of the Press or the Book Depot, is certainly an honour. But what about the responsibility involved? I am sure if all our election candidates consider the heavy responsibility that goes with all these offices, and if only such responsible men get elected, the character and life of our Church would not be what it is today—a very weak force for good.

Our elections do not really harness the best talents in the Church for its ministry. Consequently we have lay leaders who are blissfully innocent of the implications of a total lay witness, correspondents or managers of schools who know nothing about how many wrecks our schools are producing by adopting outmoded techniques, and superintendents of the Press and, Book Depot and other such concerns who do nothing but sit pretty in committees and councils. It is not surprising, therefore, that we have many a crisis in our schools, with our funds and in the impact we make upon the community. Financial debacles are becoming more and more frequent. A perusal of annual reports, I dare say, will patently reveal the futility of most of these committees and commissions, or, for that matter, many of the other appointments. One year's report is a carbon copy of the previous one as plain as a sandy waste with no interesting landscape. I

wonder if any of the elected leaders ever think of making an annual appraisal of the contribution they have made to the forward programme of the Church.

Yet, of course, the Church goes on ; the official cadre of the Church, the clergy, carries on its traditional and monotonous functions, as of old. The effectiveness of the clergy is not examined here. But it is not certainly improved by the inclusion of the lay in the structure of the Church by the kind of election we are now being used to. One would expect that the very purpose of including laymen in such bodies as committees on education, evangelism, social service and finance is to provide the lay vision and convictions on these matters. But, as so often happens, the laymen elected have, with rare exceptions, no vision or conviction of their own to contribute. They are 'yes' men and conformity is their main virtue. True, there often flare up great commotions in our councils and committees, but these do not arise out of new ideas. They arise out of personal frictions or grouses. Never have I heard of serious differences leading up to serious study of problems involved or ideological differences between the old and the new, the progressive and the 'stay as you were'.

Why then is there such stir and excitement at these elections? As already mentioned it is prestigious to be elected to the Councils. If that were all, no harm would be done. But there are other motives, too. Personal gain cannot be ruled out. Material benefit is a strong motive for rivalry for certain key posts in the structure. Followers of the aspirants to these posts also gain indirect and secondary benefits as close contacts, liaisons and campaigners. There lies the layout for party politics in the Church. Graft and nepotism are also other attractions.

All is not well with our Church and its election methods. Human weakness is too obvious and all pervading. Every thinking Christian is asking the question : What is the remedy? No one has got a cut and dry answer to that question. But there is no doubt that election campaigns are not the Christian way of a God-led church. They smack too much of intrigues, and intrigue can have no part to play in the building up of the Kingdom of God. They bring into play all the wiles of the evil one, and sometimes negative Christian virtues such as a false humility and aloofness. By common consent or by legislation this evil, electioneering, with all its party and personal conflicts must be put away. The contributory factor of material gain for holding honorary posts in the structure of the Church should be eliminated. Only then will it be possible to keep those offices open for those who have a mind to serve the common good. The provision to include Circle and Diocesan workers in all the Councils is on principle justifiable. Obviously they are the ones who should serve as the spearhead of all our projects. But the expectation has not been fulfilled. The candidates they return, in their exclusive balloting, often fall too short of the expectation. Personal interests move the electorate more than ecclesiastical interest and the candidates they send in to our councils show but lukewarm interest in anything outside their occupational interest. In effect they form a trade union within the councils and committees. Men and women among the 'workers' who can serve the Church better, too often are not popular with the 'workers' electorate'. Clerks and attendants are preferred to professors and principals. The morale and the outlook of this special

electorate ought to be educated. We cannot do without them.

The main reform one may think of, however, lies in the question whether the member should seek the office or it should be the other way round. At least in Church matters we should eschew unwholesome rivalry. Self-advertisement and canvassing should be sufficient for denying the offender any vote. One should pursue the good life and answer calls to service and leadership only when they come instead of pushing oneself into prominence. *Vox Populi Vox Dei*. The call from the people may be interpreted as the call from God. The present system of election in our

Church is most certainly not a call—either from the people or from God.

Some system must be evolved whereby the less inspired will not keep out those enthused with better motives or the less knowledgeable those who have thought and read more seriously, on the life and work of the Church. We cannot, of course, scrap the present system of election but care must be taken to raise the standard of election methods. In addition to election, a system of nomination could be introduced so that the talents, especially of those highly educated or otherwise gifted among us, will not be lost to the general pool.

Women and Church Administration

SISTER BETTY PAUL, *Madras*.

Introduction

Undoubtedly there is a growing participation of women in the management of the affairs of the churches the world over and it is true also of the Church of South India, in the Pastorate, Area, Diocese and Synod levels. Some Dioceses have a higher percentage of women serving on committees than others. Ashamed to find so few women and youth on Pastorate and other Diocesan Committees a new clause is appearing in certain diocesan constitutions that not less than thirty per cent of the membership of these committees be youth and women. Though the clause reads, 'not less than', it is highly amusing to see how carefully the youth and women are elected so as not to exceed thirty per cent so that the rest can be men over thirty-five. Fulfilling the clause in the constitution to the letter, if perchance there happen to be three eligible women under thirty-five in the nomination list for a committee of ten, with no thought for representation of men under thirty-five on the committee everybody happily goes ahead and elects seven men over thirty-five years of age. Though this situation of bringing in so many women and youth on to committees is definitely better than the previous state in which there were hardly any women and the average age was easily above fifty, it is clear that church administration is still predominantly in the hands of the over thirty-five year old men. (A very few churches are an exception to this and have definitely more women and youth in their pastorate committees than the specified thirty per cent.) This is just a statement of fact. I am not demeaning age and the administrative experience some men have; neither am I saying that the over thirty-fives should be put on the high shelf.

New Testament days and now

In case there are still some who would gladly quote St. Paul's text for women's silent subjection (1 Tim. 2: 11, 12) to keep women off any involvement in the administration of the church it is good to remind ourselves that Christ Himself raised the whole status of women by the way in which he talked with them naturally and on equal terms, at a time when it was not the accepted thing. He accepted women as persons and among the most profound conversations of His recorded in the gospels are those with women. Women minister to Him at birth, in His life and death and are the first witnesses of His rising. Christianity had a profound influence on the emancipation of women. Though St. Paul demanded silence from the women to stop the paganising influence in the assemblies, he has such superb statements as, 'in Christ's fellowship woman is as essential to man as man to woman' 1 Cor. 11: 11, and 'there is no such thing as Jew and Gentile, slave and freeman, male and female;

for you are all one person in Christ Jesus' Gal. 3: 28 (N.E.B.). While through the influence of Christianity women are accepted on equal footing with men in society, it is really strange why the co-operation of men and women in the church is so difficult to attain. We know that committees and administrative work are necessary and have a place in the smooth running of Church affairs. At the same time we also find that Church administration is getting bigger every day and is becoming a burden. Depending on the strength and wisdom of God unless there is the needed co-operation between men and women to share this burden, each bringing in their peculiar gifts, the administration of the church affairs cannot be done effectively, to the glory of God.

The Ideal—What it Should be

On the question of women in church administration our action must be determined first by the needs of the Church in our place. What others think or may be expected to think, though not unimportant, comes second. In my opinion the administration of the church of God is not to be determined by majority votes or the details of the constitution. It is a precious gift of the Holy Spirit which begins when God implants in the hearts of men and women a desire to serve Him. It is continued when their fellow Christians—that is the Church—believe that such people are fit to be given responsibilities in the church administration. Christ intends to make Himself known through their words and actions. When they are chosen it is the Holy Spirit alone who provides the gifts conferred upon them.

Choice before Women :

Direct administrative responsibility ?

or

Indirect influence without responsibility ?

Previously when there were hardly any women directly involved in the administration of the Church, even then women did have immense power in the form of influence. Wives and mothers got their way with husbands and sons and directed their opinions and votes. This was a sort of power without responsibility in the direct church administration, when women were excluded from power with responsibilities of church administration. With democracy and everyone entrusted with freedom to think, write, speak and act responsibly, any kind of influence is looked upon with suspicion, though influence cannot altogether be abolished. Women over the centuries have wielded influence with great skill and still prefer to do so behind the curtain

rather than take on responsibility and come in to the open. Women are called upon to make a choice between influence and responsibility.

Views on women and church administration

The acceptance of responsibility as an elected member of a congregation is a very new thing for women. Some women would prefer to work in Women's Fellowship groups than be on a committee where the majority are men. This is more so if they have not taken the trouble to learn committee procedure or to read a balance sheet. As home-loving women they have let their men settle all questions of policy, action and finance. Not used either at home or on committees to think in terms of rules, procedure, organisation and logical deduction, these women do not make useful contributions serving on committees. Men sometimes dismiss a whole sex judging by the inefficiency of one woman they once had on a committee. Maybe she did not talk or talked too much or not to the point, but so do some men on committees. And they get re-elected on to committees. This only shows that the inefficiency on the part of men is not always taken into account.

You will find a very impatient man who is used to an all-male committee and enjoys the atmosphere of a men's club, say at the prospect of accepting women as committee members that women are not ready for such responsibility. Other men on their experience with women committee members say that a few women may serve helpfully to decide what should be done about the discipline of women or girls but hardly speak on other topics. Some think that since, in village life, very rarely men and women meet together for discussion women are shy to express their opinion in the presence of men. There is also a general fear that if women take an active part in the administration of the church they will have no energy left for friendships and family relationships.

We also hear a lot of helpful comments. Women, it is said, talk less than men in committees because they limit themselves to the few subjects in which they have personal knowledge... Women are said to have more patience with detail and tend to think more in terms of the effects of certain actions on persons... In difficult personal situations regarding the driver or the sexton or a head of an institution, strangely enough, women are more outspoken in order to deal with it, with little resentment, while a group of men quite often temporise... Women with a lot of experience in managing on small family budgets give shrewd advice, which is brushed aside as too simple for the large scale outlays needing business techniques... The ability of women to make endless sacrifices and raise money and the thorough-going nature of much of their organised work should be made use of in the administration of the church... Many women may not think theologically, but the immense achievement of the work of women, so far done in the church for women and with women, must be made fruitful in the life of the whole Church.

However encouraging the above comments may be, they are not of much help unless they start a process of thinking within the Church, about women in the present day society

and bring about an imaginative understanding of women's role in church administration.

Women in Changing Society

The old-fashioned picture that woman is a secondary being, an agent enabling and completing man, arises out of centuries in which a woman's life was dominated by the necessity of preserving the race. Women not only live a different life from their grand-parents, but also think differently about themselves. Scientific and technological advance has changed the traditional life of women. Home is no more the centre of activity through which the mainstream of the life of the society passes. The men go away from home to work and the children go to school leaving the women restless at home. The modern woman not wanting to be left out of the working world, becomes an economic worker. Unlike the illiterate women, who because of the low wages of the men, have always shared in agriculture and gardening as well as in the heavy work in road-making and building in unskilled labours, these newly emerging economically employed women are skilled, responsible workers and potential leaders.

Picture of woman—not static but a continuous becoming

In many church circles a certain outdated picture of what woman is prevails. Not many accept the fact that there are unrealised resources which women have yet to realise and show who they are. So we must not determine what a woman is because of what she had been. The society in which she lived and the sphere that man allowed her are changed. We are very much aware of the present day trend in science and theology and the shift from the concept of 'being' to 'becoming'. While women are women, retaining the femininity, we now think in terms of a continuous becoming, a constant advance and exhibiting of new powers. Except perhaps in Burma and Japan where women seem to have had from pre-Buddhist times equal status with men in all matters, the other women are far behind men in this historical process of showing what they are. To the intelligent women of our day who not only hold responsible positions but also maintain homes, learning committee procedure and helping in the administration of the church is but an easy 'becoming'. Many have already proved their worth and their services are accepted.

Conclusion : Challenge to the Church

If the church is not prepared to accept the new God-given resources in women, they must prove them in the society which lies open before them. Women in using their yet unrealised new resources in the society are in a way obeying God and serving the church. Is not the world for which Christ died, equally the community outside the church as well as the church? We have to ask whether the true life of the church is carried on by its committees and administration of Church affairs or by the members of the church in their daily involvement in society, at home and in their places of work. Women are answering this question along with men by beginning to experiment in living encounter between the gospel and their families, friends and work.

While we piously repeat the traditional assertion that without the Holy Spirit we can get nowhere in the Christian mission, we seem to press on notwithstanding with our man-made programmes. I have not heard recently of committee business adjourned because those present were still awaiting the arrival of the Spirit of God. I have projects abandoned for lack of funds, but not for lack of the gifts of the Spirit. Provided the human resources are adequate we take the spiritual for granted. In fact we have only the haziest idea of what we mean by resources other than human wealth, human skill and human character.

—DICK KEITHAHN in *Pilgrimage in India*.

A Significant Development in Ecumenical Co-operation

A new chapter in ecumenical co-operation among churches in India has been opened by the formation of a Co-ordinating Body of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, the National Christian Council of India and the Orthodox Church representing about fifteen million Christians in the country. This important decision was taken at a meeting of the official representatives of these bodies at the Ecumenical Christian Centre, Bangalore, on 13th and 14th of July. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India was represented by Rt. Rev. William Gomes (Chairman of the C.B.C.I. Commission, on Ecumenism), Rt. Rev. Kuriakose Kunnacherry, and Rt. Rev. Symphorian Keeprath, the National Christian Council of India by its Chairman Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Chrysostom, its General Secretary Rev. M. A. Z. Rolston and Prof. Ninan Koshy and the Orthodox Church by Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Theophilus, Rt. Rev. Mathews Mar Coorilose and Fr. Paul Varghese.

The meeting was the result of the growing realisation among the churches represented about the urgent need for setting up a co-ordinating body of the churches at the official level to further the cause of ecumenism in the country and was a follow-up of resolutions passed by the churches concerned expressing such a desire and preliminary meetings. The statement adopted by the meeting declared that 'our commitment to ecumenism is the result of the conviction that the fullness of the gospel demands the unity of all Christians in their participation in Christ's ministry to the whole world and that unity and renewal are inseparable. A united church is needed not only for increasing the credibility of the Church but also for presenting a united witness. In addition to promoting joint collaboration in whatever fields possible there is also the need for taking a common stand on important issues especially related to justice and peace.'

The meeting recognised the need for greater clarity on the

relationship between the unity of the Church and the unity of mankind.

It also took note of the new tensions in churches cutting across denominational barriers based on differing interpretations of the gospel and the impatience among many sections of the church, especially youth, for a faster pace in the ecumenical movement. The need for continuous exploration and study of concepts of unity and models of union was also stressed.

The meeting reviewed the existing areas of co-operation among the churches and the ecumenical structures already established in fields like higher education, technical education, health planning, etc. There is also co-operation among churches in the urban and industrial mission, Bible in translation, in studies and other activities of local ecumenical bodies, week of prayer for unity, etc.

The co-ordinating body representing the C.B.C.I., the N.C.C.I. and the Orthodox Church would strive to do whatever is necessary and possible for the renewal, unity and mission of the Churches and it was decided to give high priority to faith and order studies, education in ecumenism at the local level, dialogue with other religions, collaboration in different fields and work among women, laity and youth.

The Secretariat of the Co-ordination Body will have initially a full-time Secretary assisted by honorary secretaries and will be located in Bangalore or New Delhi. An Executive Committee consisting of the Rt. Rev. William Gomes (C.B.C.I.), the Rev. M. A. Z. Rolston (N.C.C.I.) and the Rt. Rev. Philipose Mar Theophilus (Orthodox Church) was appointed.

—Press Release

N.C.C.T.

'Responsible Use of Funds Received'

A refutation by the Executive Committee of the Tiruchitanjore Diocese.

(i) *KNH Liaison Officer* : In Page 7 para i, the following is quoted from the *Christian Focus* (15th April, 1973 issue) :—

'In one of our Southern dioceses the Bishop's wife, though lacking the necessary qualifications, holds the office of the correspondent of an Anglo-Indian High School of the Diocese, besides being the Liaison Officer of the Kindernothilfe, for which sinecure, we understand, she receives a personal grant or salary of Rs. 8000 per annum (roughly about Rs. 650 per mensem). If the people of the Diocese think that this is a sort of monopolist partnership in an episcopal firm, they cannot be blamed for it.'

There are obvious references to this Diocese in this section. The Bishop's wife referred to here is the KNH Liaison Officer of the Diocese. This is an elected office with plenty of responsible work and not a 'sinecure'. She does not receive any remuneration for this work. The Liaison Officers of other Dioceses receive some emoluments, but our Bishop's wife has declined the offer and is doing the work for the love of children for the last six years. From 1972 onwards, at the initiative of the KNH, she is allotted a small budget to meet the salary of her steno and for office stationary

and travel and her accounts are audited by a Chartered Accountant and sent to the KNH Headquarters. To say that she is receiving Rs. 8000 per annum as a personal grant or salary is abjectly scandalous, utterly false and highly defamatory.

(ii) *Correspondent of an Anglo-Indian High School* : Again in the same para, the reference to our Bishop's wife as lacking necessary qualifications to be the correspondent of an Anglo-Indian High School is nothing but a deliberate scandal. Both from the point of view of suitability and competence as per the Government requirements, she is found to be the most fitting person for the job and the concerned department has approved her correspondentship.

However, we want to point out that the reference to the qualifications of the correspondentship of our Bishop's wife is totally irrelevant and out of context in the article under the title 'Responsible Administration of Funds Received'.

(iii) *The old treasurer re-elected as secretary and not as Treasurer* : In the next reference at the end of page 7 and in the top of page 8, again there are wrong statements.

The old Treasurer was re-elected as secretary and not as Treasurer. This is pending in the court and as it is *sub judice*, we desist from making comments, on it.

Letter to the Editor

RETIREMENT AGE FOR BISHOPS

Sir,

Mr. O. Sivaramaia's letter on 'Retirement of Bishops and Presbyters' in the *South India Churchman*, August 1973, is very uncharitable to the elder leaders of our Church.

As a son of Bishop Azariah of Dornakal (who died in 1945 in service as Bishop when he was over 70 years old), I feel that the last ten years of his life, when he was over sixty years old, were among the best, most effective and most fruitful in his service of the Diocese and the Church in India and the world. As for 'old methods of approach', he came out, till the end of his life, with so many new ideas in regard to the work of the Church and so many new interpretations of old verses from the Bible every morning at the breakfast table that quite a number of our younger missionary and other guests at the table used to contend with him on the ground that he was too bold in his proposed innovations and too much inclined to accept higher criticism of the Bible.

Mr. Sivaramaia thinks that it is a concession to Bishops that they are allowed to serve 'ten years longer than men in Government service'. As a retired Government official myself, I think the comparison is not appropriate as the work of a Bishop is not one of routine administration like that of a

Government official, but one involving providing leadership to large masses of people similar to that of the Heads of States and Governments. No retirement or maximum age is prescribed for the incumbents of any of these offices anywhere in the world. When the President of India is over 80 years old, and yet very much of an effective national leader, why should the Church deprive itself of the leadership of its top men simply on account of age?

Lastly, I would say that it appears to me that it is more urgently necessary to prescribe minimum ages for Pastors and Bishops than to prescribe retirement ages for them. A few months ago, a young clergyman strutted into my office room, introducing himself as a clergyman directing some religious Radio Programmes and interested specially in marriage counselling. He was 22 years old, and obviously immature and lacking in judgement of men and matters. I do not think I erred in advising him to give up his radio programmes and marriage counselling and to take up some regular profession such as teaching or routine clerical or administrative work in Church or Government, and get back to work involving religious leadership after ten years!

Officers' Colony,
Madras-88.

Yours faithfully,
A. J. AZARIAH.

NOTICES

Applications are invited for the post of Principal, Bishop Cotton Girls' High School, Bangalore, from Trained Graduates preferably with Post Graduate qualification and adequate teaching and administrative experience. Scale of pay 750-25-1,000-40-1,200 with free furnished quarters and conveyance. Provident Fund and Gratuity benefits after confirmation. Must be prepared to join duty in January 1974.

Apply to the Secretary, Board of Governors, Bishop Cotton Boys' School, Bangalore-1, with full particulars naming two referees by 10th November 1973.

5. Diploma Course in Religious Education (2 years): Minimum qualification for admission—P.U.C.
6. Independent and Church sponsored Research Projects.

Applications should reach the Principal, Leonard Theological College, Jabalpur, duly filled and recommended by church authorities by February 15, 1974. Application forms are available on payment of Rs. 3. All the information is contained in the application form.

DR. KARRIAPPA SAMUEL,
Registrar.

LEONARD THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE JABALPUR, M. P.

Applications for admission to the College are invited from intended candidates for the following courses to the term beginning July, 1974.

COURSES OF STUDY

1. B.D./G.Th.: Open to candidates who have passed the P.U.C. or its equivalent; but University graduates are given preference.
2. Masters of Religious Studies (M.R.S.): Open to candidates holding the B.D. degree of Serampore University or equivalent qualification.
3. Master of Theology (M.Th.): Open to candidates holding a first or second class B.D. degree of Serampore University or equivalent qualifications in the field of Theology, New Testament, Old Testament and History of Religions.
4. Bachelor of Religious Education (2 years): Open to candidates holding the B.D. Degree or L.Th. diploma of Serampore University are also eligible.

WORLD SUNDAY SCHOOL DAY

4th November, 1973

A drama and worship programme based on the story of 'Mary Jones and her Bible' is prepared by CEEFI to be used on the above day.

All churches and Sunday Schools which use CEEFI's courses are requested to get one copy free in English from the undersigned. The drama will also be available in regional languages from the CEEFI Regional Secretaries.

It is also requested that the offerings of this day be sent to the CEEFI Secretary, 17, Sunder Nagar, New Delhi-110003, or to the CEEFI Regional Secretary/Treasurer or to the Auxiliary Secretary, Bible Society of India.

The Sunday Schools and churches are free to decide in what proportion they should send the offerings to these three organizations.

Encouraging reports may also be sent to me.

17, Sunder Nagar,
New Delhi-110003.

M. M. DAS,
CEEFI Secretary.

OCTOBER 1973

Announcement

DR. CHANDRAN D. S. DEVANESEN

The Act for the North-Eastern Hill University passed by the winter session of Parliament came into force on July 19th, 1973. The President, in his capacity as the Visitor, has appointed the Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi as the first Chancellor, and Dr. Chandran D. S. Devanesen, Principal, Madras Christian College, as the first Vice-Chancellor. The jurisdiction of the new university will extend to the two states of Meghalaya and Nagaland and the Union Territories of Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram.

Dr. Devanesen was educated at Kingswood College, Kandy, and Selwyn College, Cambridge. He joined the Madras Christian College as professor of History in 1946 and became the first Indian Principal in 1962.

Dr. Devanesen attended the first World Christian Youth Assembly in Amsterdam in 1939 and the first meeting of the World Council of Churches in 1948. He was a consultant at the Uppsala meeting of the World Council of Churches. He has participated in many ecumenical gatherings in Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand and in the activities of the EACC.

He was national Chairman of the Student Christian Movement for 6 years and was involved in many activities of the World Student Christian Federation.

He represented India at a conference of educationists in Yugoslavia and at the 16th General Conference of UNESCO in Paris.

He was awarded his doctorate by the Harvard University in 1962 for his thesis on 'The first forty years of M. K. Gandhi' which has since appeared as a book entitled *The Making of the Mahatma*.

The Government of India honoured him with a Padma Shri in 1970 for his services as an educationist.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON WORLD EVANGELISATION

LAUSANNE, June 18—Representing 16 nations, the 27-member Planning Committee is chaired by A. Jack Dain, Anglican bishop from Sydney, Australia. Dr. Billy Graham, American evangelist, is honorary chairman of the Congress which will be held in Lausanne, Switzerland, July 16-25, 1974.

The executive Planning Committee is expected to determine major Congress speakers and group leaders, select the majority of the 3,000 participants nominated by national advisory committees, finalize communications plans, approve a budget, and recommend a Sunday evangelistic rally for local people in the Lausanne stadium. A programme Committee has been working for almost a year, and many Participant Selection Committees have been meeting around the world to provide input to the authoritative Planning Committee. A small staff is already resident in Lausanne.

NEW GENERAL SECRETARY FOR THE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY

The Rev. Alexander D. John has been appointed to be the General Secretary of the CLS with effect from 1st January, 1974.

Mr. John earned his Master's Degree in Divinity from the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the South West, Austin, Texas. He was SCM Secretary for 6 years from 1954-1960. He was ordained in Sheffield in 1963 where he worked as a

Curate in the Diocese of Sheffield until 1965 when he became a Secretary of the Division of World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches. From 1968 to 1972 he was Presbyterian-in-charge of St. Mark's Cathedral, Bangalore. He became the Secretary for Missions Personnel of the Christian Conference of Asia in November 1972.

N.M.S. WEEK OF PRAYER

'The N.M.S. Week of Prayer this year falls on October 8-14 and Sunday, the 14th October will be the N.M.S. Sunday. All the Churches are requested to arrange for the observance of the Week and the Day of Prayer in their churches. Copies of the Call to Prayer will be sent to the churches in due time.'

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

General Secretary, N.M.S.

THE UNITED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

17, Miller's Road, Bangalor-560006

ADMISSIONS FOR 1974-75

DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND POST-GRADUATE STUDIES

Master of Theology (M.Th.) Degree—for courses beginning in *June* in Old Testament, New Testament, Christian Theology, Church History, History of Religions and Christian Ethics

Qualifications—Serampore B.D. First or Second Class.

Post-Graduate College Diploma—for Post-Graduate students working on special research projects; each application will be considered on its own merits.

Application should reach the Principal by 28th February 1974.

DIVISION OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Bachelor of Divinity (B.D.) Degree—5-year integrated course beginning in *June* for those holding P.U.C of an Indian University or its equivalent.

Bachelor of Divinity (B.D.) Degree—3-year course beginning in *September* for those holding graduate degree of an Indian University.

Bachelor of Religious Education (B.R.E.) Degree—2-year course beginning in *June* for those holding Graduate degree of an Indian University—specially designed for Christian Education programme in the Churches. (Candidates with degrees or diplomas in Theology also may apply)

Diploma Course in Religious Knowledge (D.R.K.)—1-year course beginning in *June* for those holding Graduate degree of an Indian University, specially designed for teachers in Christian Schools and Colleges.

Application should reach the Principal by 14th January 1974.

An Entrance Examination on February 22-23, is required for all candidates for the Graduate Division.

Kindly address all enquiries to the REGISTRAR.

news from —

THE DIOCESES

MADURAI-RAMNAD

Missionary Festival and Sale

What we saw on August 11, 1973

What was it we saw in the OCPM Girls' High School compound on August 11th? Just another Church money-raising effort? A very big and enthusiastic one, no doubt, but, once again, the Church raising money—no doubt for itself! NO! Certainly not! What we saw on August 11th was something very special; indeed, we may confidently say, something quite unique. Look at these figures:

1961	Rs. 2,059	1971	Rs. 30,804
1964	Rs. 4,804	1972	Rs. 34,542
1967	Rs. 9,618	1973	above Rs. 40,000
1968	Rs. 13,935		

—figures which tell, better than words can do, the dramatic story of the Missionary Festival of the Madurai-Ramnad Diocese, a Festival inspired and carried on by the vision of Bishop Devadoss. Surely a remarkable financial achievement!—especially in these days of severe inflation.

But the Festival is remarkable in other ways, too. Remarkable for the spirit of co-operation and fellowship in which pastorates and institutions from all over the Diocese work together—not once but every year—for a cause *outside themselves*. Remarkable for the joy of oneness of the day itself, when people from distant pastorates (some come from beyond 150 kilometers) meet one another and talk and laugh and work and eat together. Remarkable, also, for the careful planning and organisation which make it run smoothly and happily. 63 stalls this year, all neatly placarded: and with other 'mobile' features, there must surely have been 100 efforts going on that day. Information; announcements full of humour; and remarkable for its efficient account-keeping.

On this day the spacious campus of the OCPM High School is transformed

into a gigantic bazaar. The opening is dignified and unhurried, in fact a full service of praise. The chief guest is almost always one of the CSI bishops and this year it was the Rt. Rev. J. Thangamuthu, Bishop in Coimbatore. After his challenging address and some items by the OCPM and Noyes School girls, the Sale is declared open and the crowds mill towards the stalls. Thereafter all is gaiety, humour, busy energy. Each pastorate and institution has brought its own speciality in crafts or produce: basketry, wood work, shell work from the coastal areas, plants, Kodai vegetables, tea from the estates, embroidery... All the men and women of the Diocese, whose heart moved them to bring anything... brought it as their free-will offering to the Lord—as in Exodus 35. Did you come early without breakfast? Here are pooris being cooked for you. Mid-morning snacks? An abundance of delicacies. A biriyani lunch? Also curd rice with hot pickles!

What makes this annual event possible? All through the year people are encouraged to look beyond themselves and the needs of their own pastorate to 'mission'—whether it be our CSI missions in Papua or Thailand or within India, or the very much alive Home Missions of the Madura-Ramnad Diocese

and to distribute money to give support to more than twenty Missionary and evangelistic efforts both inside and outside India as far as Fiji islands and Jerusalem East Mission including the evangelistic projects within the Diocese.

Like most words in the Church, 'mission' is required these days to stand up and explain itself. What is mission, nowadays? What new methods must it employ? What new justification can it claim? Let the discussion go on. We stand, and we know we stand, under the eternal great Commission, 'Go ye into all the world.'

MARGARET HARRIS

Presbyters' wives retreat

Presbyter's Wives' Retreat is an annual feature in our Diocese. This year a group of altogether too zealous wives of our Presbyters together with a few dead-in-earnest women workers of our Diocese, numbering 35 in all arrived at the premises of our C.S.I. Training School for men, Batlagundu, Madurai Dist.

We had our retreat from July 26-29, 1973, with Mrs. and Rev. V. D. Sahayam as our leaders, who came from Madras. The theme for the retreat was 'The Christian Marriage'. We discussed the 'What' and 'Why' and 'How' of Christian marriage with all the privileges, problems, and blessings involved in it. The talks of our leaders were more of a sharing than of a mere lecturing and hence were down-to-earth and useful to us all. Hence, we were busily and cheerfully engaged from 5.30 a.m. till 8.30 p.m.

We enjoyed being together at worship, for talks at meals and at the entertainment programme. What made us feel still closer to each other was our picnic (educational tour) to Kodaikanal Hills.

JOYCELENE GNANARAJ

— : O : —

Be like the rose; Jesus was a beautiful rose, you do not need to talk about the rose; it speaks for itself. I am not saying this is evangelism; I am saying I take such a challenge seriously.

—DICK KEITHAHN in *Pilgrimage in India*.

Book Notes—(Continued from p. 18)

hopes and disappointment. They are presented in such a way that the readers can be convinced that, all things considered, life is livable and existence more than tolerable because of friendship, sacrifice and similar other experiences

that continue to come the way of man in this world and lift him above the prejudices and banalities of caste and other barriers that stand between man and man.

The scenes are laid in Jaffna, but the

author achieves variety of settings by diversifying the social and physical background and the occupations and problems of the characters.

D.A.T.



GENEVA—Each year \$10 million are channelled through the Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) by churches around the world in support of some 600 projects in more than 80 countries.

But having said all that, which gives a sense of the size, the diversity and the ecumenical nature of the whole 'system', it would be a mistake to give the impression that CICARWS sits back satisfied, feeling a good job has been done. Like every other part of the WCC structure, CICARWS is constantly being faced with the question about the rightness and efficacy of what it is trying to achieve, and is therefore constantly changing both its understanding and its mode of operation.

Today thorough-going changes are taking place in the project system, designed to make it more responsive to the needs of the churches in the Third World and to try to make it possible for there to be a genuine partnership in giving and receiving.

The questions usually levelled at the project operation were first aired in a systematic way at the consultation 'Ecumenical Assistance to Development Projects' held at Montreal in 1970. Participants in that meeting found that the project system used Western procedures inappropriate in a developing country; that it required an administrative structure insensitive to the needs of developing countries; that it was too inflexible and impersonal—too much time elapsed between completing the first form and receiving the first grant, that it dealt with individual projects that look at the symptoms rather than the causes of undevelopment and that the donors set the priorities.

A basic decision was made to decentralise the screening process so that the projects proposed for listing should be discussed regionally as well as locally. It was understood that the regional discussion would be the place where decisions for listing were made. The 'power' of Geneva was therefore transferred to regional groups in each of the different areas of the world. They had the power and the responsibility to fix the shape of inter-church aid work in their region. Being in relationship with CICARWS, they have a larger task than simply screening projects. They have to review inter-church aid problems and

issues and make recommendations to the Commission in the frame-work of the life and mission of the churches in each region.

Priority Projects

Another change that has been taking place in the project system has come through the creation of a category of priority projects. In the last few years so many projects were listed that only 60% of the requests were met. The list became known as a 'shopping list' where donors could happily choose the projects they wanted to fund. It was no wonder they were accused of determining priorities.

In 1972, for the first time, projects were listed by category. Those placed in Category I by the asking church were regarded as their nationally defined priority work, and CICARWS made a promise that it would concentrate on seeking support for those projects. It was hoped that the donors would take these priorities seriously and not merely pick up the projects they thought were good. Additionally it was hoped that the churches would really sit together in their own national situation to discuss priorities.

Persecution of Christians in Russia

Apart from in Albania, the most zealous persecution of Christians in Europe takes place in the Soviet Union. More and more people are believing in Jesus Christ—and not only the illiterate and very old citizens as the Communists would like. No, it is the young people and the students in particular who are looking for ways to escape the grip of cold, businesslike materialism. 'A short while ago we heard that revival has come to Georgia, the area Stalin came from. Some one hundred and fifty students have been saved amongst others', wrote Earl Poysti in February. Earl Poysti is a well-known evangelist, who reaches Russia by radio. In the Ukraine house-churches have come into being round the radio.

I admit that such reports do not give a statistically reliable proof of the growth

of the Churches in the Soviet Union. What are one hundred and fifty students compared with two hundred and forty million Russians? Even

so, these pieces of news have more to tell us than we would guess at first sight. Comparatively little news comes through the barbed wire with which Russia has defined her borders, but it gives an impression of what is happening behind the scenes. Perhaps the Russian newspapers speak even more clearly. The Council of Relatives of E.C.B. Prisoners sent a lengthy letter to the Soviet Government. Here are extracts from that letter. The figures stated are lower than is in fact now the case because since they were compiled another year has passed.

The punishments have been meted out to the 'Initsiativniki' (Reform Baptists) Church. To the Government of the Soviet Union:

In 1961 the police and the KGB (Secret police) began persecuting the E.C.B. Christians because they wanted to go on serving God. They have done this with your permission because serving God does not accord with communism's programme. Since then eleven years have gone by.

The following is a brief summary of police action against us. Nearly 650 leaders have been imprisoned, their sentences varying from one to ten years. Hundreds have been imprisoned in local jails with sentences of up to fifteen days.

On thousands of occasions prayer meetings have been broken up by the police and K.G.B. men and their helpers.

More than 2,00,000 roubles have been paid in fines by Christians for attending at Church services.

Fines were not limited to the extraction of money only. The authorities have also confiscated the following objects: furniture, livestock, clothes, bricks, radios, sewing machines, washing machines, etc.

Thousands of religious books have been confiscated during house searches. A large percentage of these were destroyed by decree of the court.

The young children of Christian parents have been periodically questioned, frightened, insulted and humiliated.

Open Doors
(Special Russian Edition)

'PILGRIMAGE IN INDIA'

by R. R. KEITHAHN, C.L.S. for C.I.S.R.S., pp. 75, Rs. 2.50

This book is No. 13 in the Indian Christian Thought series and has the sub-title of 'An Autobiographical Fragment'. It is, however, by no means fragmentary but all of a piece. Like its author, it is incisive, plunging to depth almost without warning, raising fundamental questions on social justice and Christian discipleship—and challenging at every turn. It is again typical of its author that its contents are not arranged in chronological order or according to themes, but in chapters roughly corresponding to broad areas of significant experience. The book is low-priced and short and at the same time so intimately concerned with vital issues for the Church that every Christian parish library, institution and leader should get a copy at once. It could also be taken up as the 'book of the month' in institutions and congregations where books are studied and discussed in groups.

The first chapter describes the early influences on the author—the 'background frontiers'—which include 'out-standing personalities' as well as the common man, early opportunities for working with young people, the Student Voluntary Movement and Prophetic Christianity.

In the next chapter, 'On the Mission Frontier' Keithahn recounts some of the problems and perplexities that confronted him when he came out as a missionary to India. He found the missionaries casteey, convention-ridden and over-scrupulous even about such things as food and drink and riding in a carriage so as not to appear pedestrian! He found them surrounded by 'yes-men' and the Church controlled by them over-institutionalised.

His fellow-missionaries told him, 'There are many things you do not understand. You must accept some things out of a long mission experience'. But he replied, 'I can never accept that which is not Christian', and went on to wear *Khaddar* in response to Gandhiji's challenge to the nation. His fellow-missionaries were embarrassed, scandalised. For his part, he says, 'Again and again in India, I was to learn more about my Master than I had ever learned in the west.'

'Challenged' is the title of the third chapter which describes the many ways in which Keithahn felt challenged as a

follower of Christ by... several persons and groups in India—a capable and conscientious headmaster in Madurai diocese by the name of V. M. Abraham, Bishop Abraham of the Mar Thoma Church, the Christian Ashrams, the Kerala Youth Christian Council of Action and prominent members of it like A. K. Tharien, A. K. Thampy and M. M. Thomas (who, in the foreword to the book, calls him 'one of my mentors' and speaks of him as one in whom faith in Christ was 'translated into a passion for service of the poor'). Other challenges came from outside Christian bodies—from the International Fellowship, the constructive programmes of Gandhiji and Vinoba Bhave and fellow-workers in Gandhigram and *Sarvodaya*.

'Brother Dick' was not challenged for nothing. In his turn he went about challenging people and the Church. To be sure, he got on the nerves of fellow-missionaries with his unconventional ways and views and seemingly impertinent questioning. We admit that it was good for them, 'far away from our homes and relatives, to meet now and then', but adds, 'we did not need to be that clannish'. There were other failures, too. 'Now tightly we hung on to our control! How petty we were with our Indian colleagues!' And then there was the senior missionary who confessed to him, 'I did not know that the one who baptised was also responsible to nurture those he baptised'.

Since the missionaries handed over responsibility the challenge of Keithahn has been going out to the Indians who have taken over! 'Are we listening to Him as followers of Jesus Christ ought to listen?... Have our Indian colleagues, now in-charge, learned from those mistakes (of the past)? What are we doing to truly help the Church to be native to India! A few pages further on he points out that 'we have yet to devise a suitable Christian nurture programme for our villagers'.

In the last chapter Keithahn looks back with a thankful heart for a pilgrimage, beginning for him when he was fourteen years old, in the course of which he had 'walked with some of the great been kicked around a bit, and never remained too long in one place, has had an undue share of recognition in life'. At one point he had to give up being a missionary. In his words, 'From the beginning of my coming to India again and again it was

urging, "Take Jesus seriously!" The Mission Compound response seemed to be, "First take us seriously!" I did: that was why I had to get out!' However, there were more than compromises for such losses including a period of reinstatement as a missionary and other kinds of recognition.

This is a book for any one who cares about social justice or the gospel. Keithahn is outspoken about Indian society in general and about all those who ought to be accepting responsibility for putting things right like the Sarvodaya Fellowship. But his challenge is in a special way addressed to the Church, if only because more has been given to it than to any other body. There are also lighter moments in the book with humorous anecdotes and amusing points of view such as that of the servants of the missionaries dubbing the solemn conclave of their masters *roti kuttam* (meeting for eating bread). For this, too, the book is readable. But the great contribution of this writer and his book is the probing and the challenge that keep ringing out:

'How much India needs the true witness of the church, not the mercy living of the denominational or national Church! If dedicated disciples of Jesus Christ within the Church, walk and dialogue with similar pilgrims in India, there may be a great day for humanity.'

The bane of the Church has often been that it has been insular and arrogant and cared much more for itself than for humanity. Here is one more challenge to it to practise true humility, openness and love. If at least some members of the Church will heed it and respond to it the author will not have made his pilgrimage or written about it in vain.

D.A.T.

AS SILENT AS LIGHT AND OTHER STORIES

by RANEE SATHIANADHAN
Christian Literature Society,
pp. 91, Rs. 4.75

This is a book of stories which, even if not psychologically subtle or thrilling in plot construction, make quite interesting reading, especially for those who would like to be reassured about the enduring values of life. The themes are those of friendship and misunderstanding, love and estrangement, human

(Continued on p. 16)

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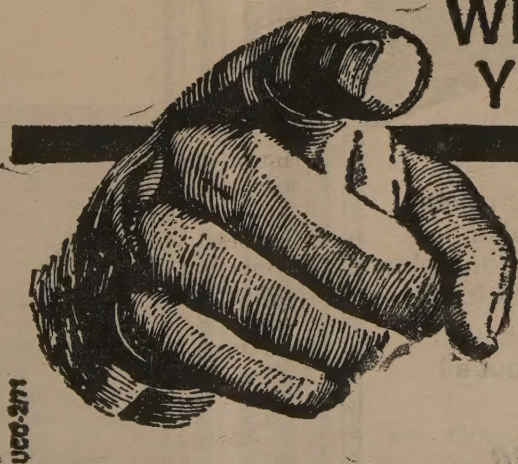
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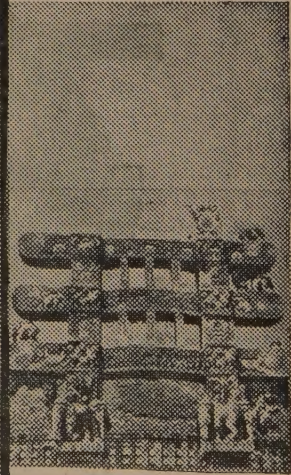
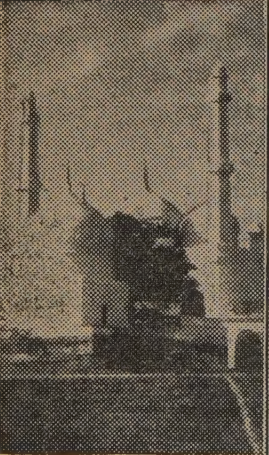
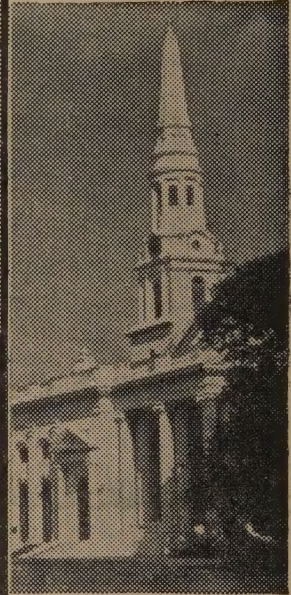
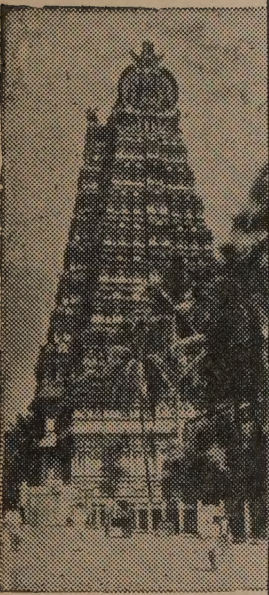
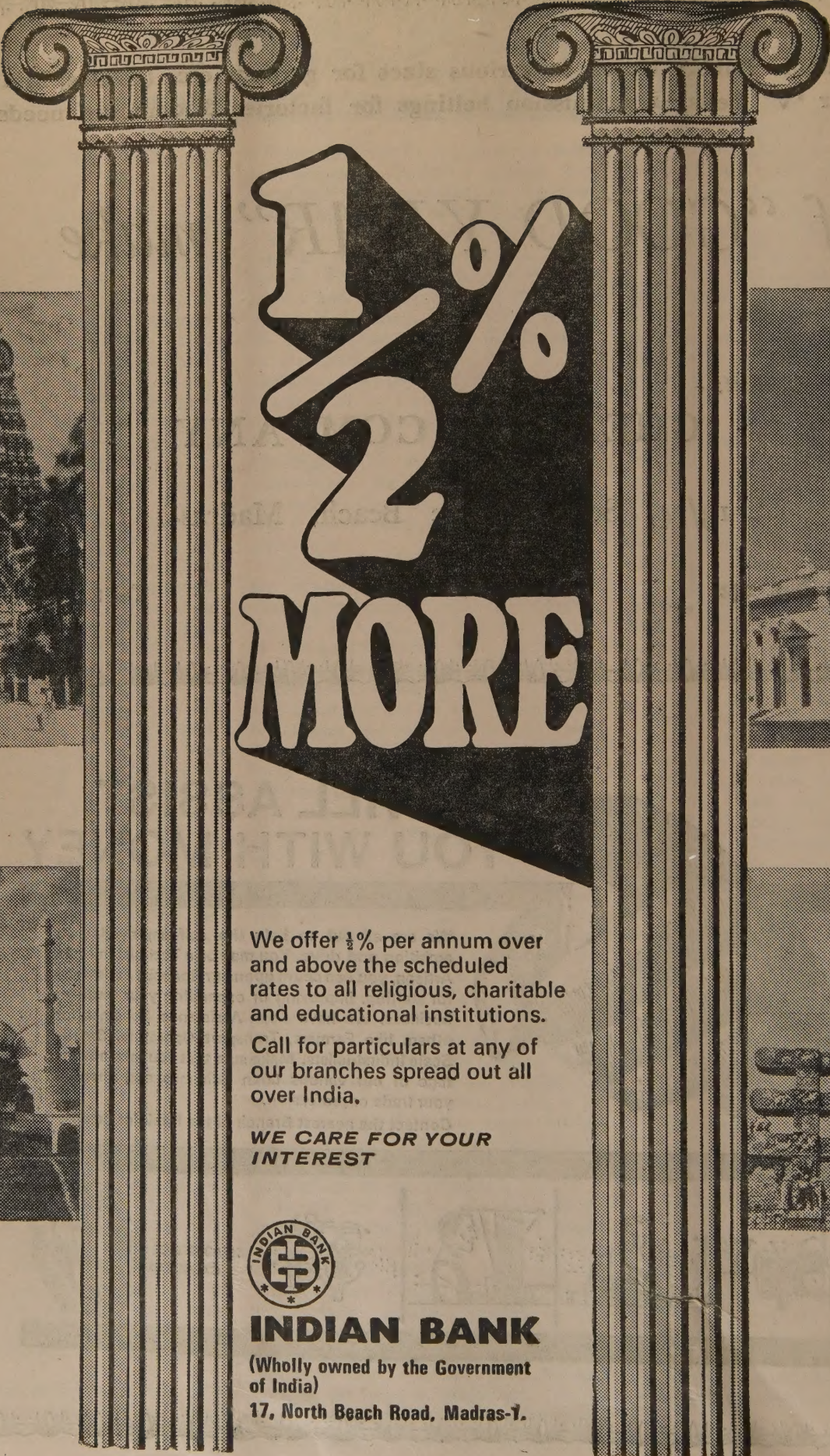


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